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SUBJECT: MALTA: AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS  
WITH MINISTER FOR JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

REF: STATE 121761

11. (SBU) Summary. Ambassador Bordonaro met with Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, on December 9, to discuss Malta,s progress on implementing the Trafficking in Persons Action Plan in the hopes of attaining Tier 1 status in 2009. Malta has recently taken a number of positive steps, including courses with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for their key personnel in law enforcement and social services to be trained to provide internal courses for their own organizations and an informational awareness campaign. Ambassador Bordonaro praised the work that Malta has done and encouraged Mifsud Bonnici to provide additional numbers on the arrests and prosecutions of traffickers. End summary.

12. (SBU) On December 9, in a meeting with Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, Ambassador Bordonaro thanked the Minister for the GOM,s efforts to address the issue of trafficking in persons (TIP) in Malta. Ambassador Bordonaro stressed that without clear statistics on the numbers of arrests, prosecutions and investigations conducted by the police Malta,s efforts on TIP might not be accurately reported. Though the extent of TIP is limited in Malta, Minister Mifsud Bonnici pointed out that the police actively pursue investigations into possible TIP cases and promised to deliver the statistics for accurate reporting in the 2009 TIP Report.

#### Background

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13. (U) Malta experiences very few cases of trafficking in persons. Since 2005, the total number, of identified victims of trafficking, does not reach double digits. On an island of 400,000 that is 19 miles long at its longest point, the police are familiar with the prostitutes and the areas in which they operate. Despite the limited scope of trafficking in Malta, the police actively investigate all cases of potential victims of trafficking and have a formalized system in place to refer potential victims to Appogg, the Government,s Social Welfare Services Agency and part of the Ministry for Social Policy.

#### IOM Training

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14. (SBU) Ambassador Bordonaro also praised the GOM for taking the initiative to organize EU funding for a training course for its key law enforcement and social services personnel to be able to conduct internal training within the police and social services in order to better identify and assist possible victims of trafficking. The GOM reached out to the EU to provide funding for the IOM led course, which was one of the key recommendations in the G/TIP Action Guide. Ray Aquilina, Police Inspector on the Vice Squad, and Marion Gauci, Director at Appogg, participated in a week-long session to develop a curriculum for internal training courses with personnel in their respective organizations. Aquilina

and Gauci expect to begin their internal training sessions in January 2009 so that officers within their respective organizations have an increased understanding of the issue of trafficking and are able to identify potential victims and offer appropriate assistance.

#### Informational Awareness Campaign

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15. (SBU) Another key recommendation of the G/TIP Action Guide was an informational awareness campaign. Ambassador Bordonaro thanked Mifsud Bonnici for responding to the need for an informational awareness campaign by producing a brochure in June 2008, to reach out to victims of trafficking and notify victims of the resources available to them. The brochure, produced by Appogg, contains detailed information about how an individual who may be a victim of trafficking can seek assistance; it also gives detailed information to help individuals understand how to identify a potential trafficking victim and where to refer them for assistance. Since the production of this brochure, Appogg has distributed these brochures in the hospitals at the police stations and other community centers. Ambassador Bordonaro encouraged the Minister to expand the distribution of these brochures and the informational awareness campaign on TIP to include nightlife areas, such as Paceville. Mifsud Bonnici indicated that he would discuss the matter with the head of Appogg, but opined that it would be a feasible solution.

16. (SBU) Comment: Malta has shown that it is willing to work with us on TIP and take into consideration all of the USG recommendations contained within the Action Plan. Mifsud Bonnici indicated that Malta would be very appreciative of

G/TIP funded training course with a prosecutorial expert. End comment.  
BORDONARO